



Utah Farm Bureau Federation

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May 5, 2003

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Rick Black
HDR Engineering, Inc.
3995 South 700 East, Suite 100
Salt Lake City, Utah 84107-2594

Attention: Finance Docket No. 34075 – Environmental Comments

Dear Rick,

We received your letter regarding the proposed rail line between the general areas of Mills (Juab Co.) and Sigurd (Sevier Co.). We have reviewed the letter and make the following comments.

The Utah Farm Bureau Federation is an organization of farmers and ranchers that develop and implement policies to promote and protect the interests of agriculture and agricultural producers. We have policy on transportation as well as production agriculture. In the mid 80s, after the floods had washed out much of the D&RGW line in Utah County, we had a policy in support of re-establishing the rail line. And later when D&RGW had abandoned the Marysville Branch, we supported a proposal to reconnect at Gunnison to Mills. However, when the Governor chose to salvage the rail line, it changed those proposals.

The Farm Bureau has participated in some of the meetings that have been held concerning this present proposal. We are following the issue and have received concerns from some of our members in the Gunnison-Fayette area.

The main concern has been where the rail line would be located and what impact it would have on farm and ranch operations. The segmentation of fields, fences, roads, and irrigation systems are among those concerns. Some specific questions have been asked that we would like a response to:

1. If there are any, how will impacted wetlands be mitigated?
2. Is it anticipated that some lands will need to be condemned? If condemnation is necessary, what process will be followed to provide for fair compensation?
3. Will the project costs include money to pay for fencing, road construction, and irrigation systems reconstruction on private lands?
4. Will the impacts of segmentation be considered as an item of compensation?

We realize there are a couple of alignments for the proposed rail line. We also realize there is some opposition by some landowners to the proposal as well as support from other landowners. These issues will, of course, be addressed as the proposal moves forward.

The Farm Bureau supports sound, competitive transportation systems because agriculture relies on those systems to move agricultural products and supplies. We also are a leading organization for private property rights.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide input and ask that we be included in discussions and proposals that are considered on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John B. Keeler". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

John B. Keeler
Southern Regional Manager
Utah Farm Bureau Federation